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This curious Lake County,



# THIS CURIOUS LAKE COUNTY





# THIS CURIOUS LAKE COUNTY



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By  
**Harold C. Allison**



PAUL BUNYAN PRESS  
BALDWIN MICH.



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## First in Lake County

First settlement in Lake County: Lorenzo Conklin arrived on section 24 of Chase Township in 1862.

1st East and West railroad: Flint & Pere Marquette between 1872 and 1874.



1st North and South R.R.: Grand Rapids to Baldwin, '83  
Baldwin to Traverse City, 1890.

County first organized in 1871. Before that it was part of Ottawa County, then Mason County, then Newaygo Co. and later Osceola County.

1st newspaper in Lake County: the Lake County Star in 1873 followed by the Chase Eclipse, the Luther Observer, the Idlewild Community Herald, the Marlboro Times.

1st bank in Baldwin was opened in 1908 with Robert J. Smith as cashier.

1st school: a log building, district number 3 in Chase Twp.

1st Lake County fair: in 1882. The first Michigan State fair was in 1849.

1st abstract office in Lake County established in 1912 by Ray Trucks.

1st oil well under permit: 1930, section 11 in Dover Twp. This dry hole was followed by over 200 additional wells in the county, the best producers being in Pinora and Peacock Townships.

## THIS CURIOUS LAKE COUNTY

The geologists tell us that Michigan, including Lake Co was once covered with a glacier. As this ice sheet moved and melted it formed the hills, valleys and the 740 square miles of the Pere Marquette River and also the basins of the Pine, the Sauble and the Little Manistee Rivers in Lake County.

Rocks were pushed down from Canada, rounded off by being rolled over and over, then cemented together to form conglomerates or pudding stones of quartz pebbles colored red, brown, black and sometimes pink and banded agates.

The Wolf Lake hills, the Lincoln hills and the Ward hills are called "moraines", a smaller hill is called a "Drumlin", shaped like the back of a spoon.

The highest elevation in Lake County is 1075 feet near Chase and the lowest spot at the west county line at 734 feet above sea level.

The total area of Lake County is over 390,000 acres.

Public lands in Lake County: over 174,000 acres, about 47% of the county. Chase Twp. has the smallest amount of public land and Sweetwater Twp. has the most acreage of public land.

Water: 3,200 acres with Big Star Lake being the largest with over 900 acres. Cherry Valley is the only Twp. with no lakes.

In 1837 Michigan was admitted to the Union and in the same year the state was surveyed.



## Forests

Baldwin is at the center of the Manistee National Forest.

Baldwin school sponsored the planting of 40 acres of pines on section 4 of Pleasant Plains Township.

Chase Township school had 40 acres in section 18 for the planting of trees.

Eighty acres of pine plantings in section 4 of South Newkirk Township was sponsored by Luther school.

The Baldwin Woman's Club sponsored 40 acres, Webber Township for their project in tree planting.

The Civilian Conservation Corps of the U.S.A. which employed over two million members in 1933 to 1942 planted trees, improved streams, worked in parks, and built roads in the forest.

In 1980 D. N. R. arrested over eighty people for stealing timber from state lands.

The last log drive down the Pere Marquette River was in 1904 by Ralph Hollistor, father of the late Howard Hollistor of the Lake-Osceola State Bank.

Michigan is the largest grower of Christmas trees in the United States.

## Michigan Stamps

In September 1968 a six cent stamp was issued honoring Father Jacques Marquette, the French missionary explorer. The Pere Marquette River which crosses Lake County was named after this Catholic priest.

Showing the state seal, a purple three cent stamp was issued November 1935 as a centennial stamp.

The Michigan State flag was featured on a thirteen cent stamp issued February 23, 1976.

During 1982 a twenty cent stamp was issued which pictured a plentiful bird in Lake County, the robin.



Another twenty cent stamp showed the Michigan State Flower, the apple blossom. The wild pink sweetbriar rose common to Lake County belongs to the same plant family as the apple.

## Govenors Longest Terms

1949 - 1960	G. Mennen Williams
1963 - 1968	George Rommney
1969 - 1982	William G. Milliken

## Buildings

The only two story building of poured concrete in Lake County is located in Chase on US-10.

The oldest house in Baldwin, the "Meadow Lark Haven" is in the 1,000 block on Michigan Ave.

The "Octagon Castle", built of logs is in Pleasant Plains Township.

Several schools in Lake County were built by the WPA project, among them being those at Chase, Idlewild and Sweetwater.



The gym of the Baldwin Community School was built in 1959. It was named after Max Brail, who was school superintendent in Baldwin for 27 years.

The Baldwin Village hall on 9th St. was built at the Walhalla CC Camp in the early 1930's. The government built barracks at Idlewild, Irons, Peacock and Wolf Lake. When Kenneth Trucks was village president, he obtained two of the buildings which were moved to property leased from the C & O Railroad.

The Lake County courthouse burned in 1927 and was rebuilt.

Of the five buildings on 7th St. that were used as a school house, the one on the corner of Oak and 7th St. is the oldest.

The first sound movie theater in Lake County was built by Alton Hodgins in 1930. Eventually the building was occupied in 1977 by the Baldwin Pathfinder library.

## Discontinued Post Offices in Lake Co.

Forman	Reno
Edgetts	Carrs
Nirvana	Olivers
Ellsworth	Peacock
Deer Lake	Stearns
Norway Hall	Wingleton
Marlborough	Summitville
Carrieville or Carey	Sauble Station

### Settlements With Name Change

Green Dell to Chase  
Peters to Peacock  
Bennett to Stearns  
Hannible to Baldwin  
Unger's to Idlewild  
Wingleton to Kinne Creek Asson.

### Places With No Post Office

Elk	Olga
Bush's	Holst
Nabon	Hawk's
Totten	Keenan
Conley	Bristol
Canfield	Foxville
Poland's	Daniel's
Hansen's	McCumber's
Skellinger's	Russel's Mill
Little Manster	Robey's Junction



## Chase

If you lived in Chase, the County Seat of Lake County in the 1870's you could have heard the whistles of over a dozen steam powered saw mills not far away.

Chase, in the early days, had a population of over 900 people and contained many a business.

Drugs, Mathews	Hotel, Hurley House
Barber, Newman	Dry Goods, H. Thomas
Shoes, S. F. Mullin	Meats, Zack Blood
Surgeon, Dr. Torrey	Tools, John Knevel
Watches, E. D. Dilon	Grain, Feed, Palmer's
Plastering, L. McMillen	Farmer, John E. Keller
Attorney, A. J. Campbell	Shippers, L. Stark & Co.
Billiards, Lee McGinley	Painting, N. E. Coolige
Saw mill, Harmon Brown	News depot, K.J. Burley
Gen. store, B.J. Halliday	Blacksmith, Yoder & Dennis
Blacksmith, W. Messenger	Lumber, C.W. Joiner & Son
Harness, John Ringler	Carpenter, Gree & Johnson
Merchandise, Chas. Samis	Cong. Church, Rev. Camp
Meth. Church, Rev. Hall	Cabinet maker, Wm. Hoover

Plus a weekly newspaper, several saloons, fire department, two livery stables, opera house, lodge hall, school and R.R. station.

Many of the above business places were destroyed by fire but later other stores were built, a pickle receiving station, a grist mill, a school, a garage, a Post Office and church were erected.

The square two story house on Joiner St. and the home at Third and Center St. are two of the oldest buildings in the village of Chase, being over a hundred years old.

Lloyd Ringler was supervisor of Chase Township for 34 years.

## Once Found in Lake County

- An old time blacksmith  
Hire a modern welder.
- A log drive down the river  
Purchase a truck and tractor.
- A wood shingle mill  
Keep on looking.
- A barn raising crew  
Engage a carpenter gang.
- A veterinarian  
Try a neighboring county.
- An ice house for a meat market  
Buy a refrigerator.
- A hotel  
Find one of the many motels.
- A clock and watch repair shop  
Go to an adjacent community.
- A harness maker  
Proceed to Hawkins, Newaygo County.
- A rain maker  
Wait and see. .
- A Redman or Maccabee Lodge  
Join the Rotary, Lions, Chamber of  
Commerce.
- A passenger pigeon  
You should have lived here 100 years ago.

## Purr-fect Pets

If you want to see a variety of pets, you might want to view the annual pet parade at the Lake County Trout Festival in Baldwin. A cat in a baby carriage, a dog pulling a cart or a prancing pony might be seen on the parade route.



Several people were mystified in 1952 when they heard someone calling "hello, hello" from a tree and could see no one there. It was a talking pet crow, owned by the David and Marie Moore family in Baldwin.



It was the style in the 1970's to own a pet rock.



"Cats are like women, women are like cats. They are both very ungrateful".

*—Damon Runyon*



"Feed a dog for three days and he'll remember your kindness for three years; feed a cat for three years and she will forget your kindness in three days".

*—Japanese Proverb*



Most cats are affected by catnip. Some become excitable, others might act drunk. .

## Idlewild

Idlewild was first platted in 1915 by the Idlewild Resort Co. which was composed of B. G. Branch, Adelbert Branch, W. M. Lemon and A. E. Wright.

A wooden foot bridge connected the island with the mainland in 1915.

Mrs. Hattie Buckles built the first cottage in Idlewild.

Paradise Club which hosted many big name entertainers during summer months was built in 1922 by the Wilsons.

Joe Louis who was the heavyweight boxing champion for over 11 years (1937-1949) visited Idlewild. In 1935 he was selected by the Associated Press as the athlete of the year.

Mrs. Louise Malone Braxton, said to be the only woman bass singer, spent some time in Idlewild.



Other entertainers in Idlewild were Della Reese, The Four Tops, Count Basie, Brook Benton, Barbara McNair, Maceo Thomas, Jackie Wilson, B. B. King, Nipsie Russel and Billie Eckstein.

Joseph McMillion, the educator, taught school in Baldwin at one time.

Paul Collins, the artist, had occasion to visit Idlewild.

## Transportation

US-10 begins at Detroit, runs west through Lake County and ends at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

M 37, formerly M-54, went north from Battle Creek through Lake County on the west side of Wolf Lake by the way of Peacock and Irons to Traverse City and Old Mission.



The Auto License Plate Collectors Association voted as the best: The red and white bicentennial Mich. license plate of 1976.

Sept. 1968: Snowmobiles were first licensed in Michigan. Michigan ranks first in the nation for snowmobile deaths.

There was once a race track for horses near Aster Road and Washington St. in Baldwin.

Blessing of the motorbikes is annual affair at the Baldwin landing field.

Discontinued railroads in Lake County:

East from P. M. R. R. to Mariboro

South two miles from Forman

South from Stearns to Carrs

G. R. & I. east of Luther

M. & L. west of Luther

West from Olga

North and south of Ward Lake

North and south from Chase

## Lakes and Streams

At one time Kinney Creek Club installed a generator on the creek to produce their electricity at Wingelton.



The plant at the dam near 8th Street in Baldwin supplied direct current in the early 1900's. Michigan Public Service Co. later took over and changed to a c. current. When the Consumers Power Co. obtained the franchise, they rebuilt the lines.



The Little Manistee River furnished d.c. power for the electrical needs of Luther before Consumers installed their high lines.



The first annual cleanup on the Pere Marquette River was held in 1956.

Michigan's shoreline (3121 miles) is only exceeded by Alaska's shoreline.

The Luther dam and the Danaher dam were washed out by the heavy rains in 1936.

Patrick M. Danaher was director and later the president of the Ludington Boom Co. which floated logs down the Pere Marquette River in 1872.

## Farming



There are over 5,000 centennial farms in Michigan, that is, farms that have been in the same family for 100 years or more. The Trowbridge farm in Dover Township and the Gaedcke and Dacles farms in Chase Township are centennial farms in Lake County.

Potatoes were shipped by the car load on the G. R. & I. R. R. from Luther.

In 1872 the Grange was organized.

In 1919 the Farm Bureau was put in operation.

Lake County contained pickle receiving stations at Luther, Irons, and Chase in the 1920's.

In 1920 there were over 196,000 farms in Michigan. Sixty years later there were less than 64,000 farms in the state.

## **"Marlborough is Booming"**

So said a newspaper of 1903 when the village had an 88 room hotel, a post office, electric lights, a band, a railroad, a Maccabee lodge, a fire department, an opera house, school, a dancing school, a general store with a meat market, and the Great Northern Portland Cement Co. factory.

The initial 72 houses built by the company were occupied by the shareholders and workers.



Printing on cement sack

The idea behind this boom town was to manufacture cement from the local clay and marl.

The million dollar project was sold for taxes when it went bankrupt in 1908 because the so-called wet process was too expensive for manufacturing cement and the amount of marl available was found to be inadequate.



## **Concerts Can Be a Blast**

The Chase Concert Band of 1880 was the first musical organization mentioned in Lake County.

The twenty member Marlborough Concert Band of 1903 used instruments donated by H. H. Parsons who was president of the Great Northern Portland Cement Co. of Marlborough. O. A. Camsdon was the conductor.

The Scottville Clown Band in all its glory can be seen at the annual Lake County Trout Festival.



Leonard Keller, Jim Brown, Harold Fisher and Howard Updegraph were some of the old timers in the dance bands.

Many Mich. villages had a band stand in the park where musical selections could be heard Saturday evenings in the summer.

David M. Eby, the band instructor and 64 members of the Baldwin Community High School Band went to Vienna in July 1973 to participate in a Music and Youth Festival. The accompanying chaperons were seven in number.

## Minerals

Michigan ranks first in the nation's salt production.

No precious crystals can be found in Lake County but local quartz and red jasper can be polished for ornaments. Drill cores from gas and oil wells have been cut and polished for settings in rings, brooches and pendants.

The soft Petoskey stone is easily worked in various shapes for jewelry. Calcite can be found in Lake County but it is too soft for jewelry.

The red and white stripped Lake Superior agate can be found occasionally in the gravel pits.

Indian arrowheads from Lake County of chert or flint have been used for stick pins or bola ties. Skinning stones, scrapers, awls and spears of stone have been picked up.



## Historical Markers

### Michigan Historical Site

MICHIGAN HISTORICAL COMM.

The Michigan Historical Commission in 1955 dedicated their first marker to register historical sites.

There is a marker at the Lake County court house and one at the Shrine of the Pines.

## Churches in Lake County

### CHASE TP.

Methodist

### CHERRY VALLEY TP.

Community Baptist

### DOVER TP.

Baptist, Methodist, 7 Day Advent

### EDEN TP.

St. Bernard Catholic, Union

### ELLSWORTH TP.

Edgetts Wesleyan

### LAKE TP.

Evergreen, Star Lake Chapel

### PLEASANT PLAINS TP.

Baptist, Congregational, Full Gospel, Grace and  
Truth, Lutheran, Methodist, St. Ann's Catholic

### NEWKIRK TP.

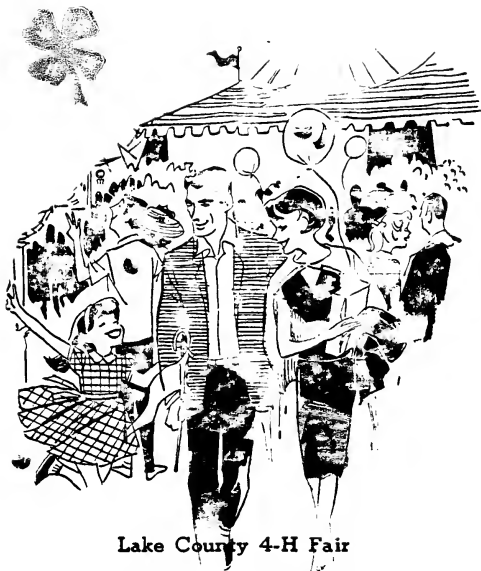
Methodist Church of Christ, St. Ignatius Catholic

### WEBBER TP.

Jehovah Witness,  
Bethlehem, Christ Community,  
Church of Christ, Goodwill Baptist

### YATES TP.

Idlewild God in Christ,  
Tabernacle A. M. E., 1st. Baptist, 7 Day Advent,  
Jerusalem Church of God and Christ, 1st. Baptist



### Lake County 4-H Fair

The first Lake County 4-H Fair was held in 1985.

The Michigan 4-H program was started in 1917. The Lake County 4-H is part of the Co-operative Extension Service and Michigan State University. 4-H stands for: Head, Heart, Hands and Health, its motto, "To Make the Best Better." Fred Dostal was Lake County extension agent for 24 years. In 1980 Jeffrey Niese took over the position.

## Lake County Map

ELK	EDEN	NORTH NEWKIRK	DOVER
SAUBLE	PEACOCK	SOUTH NEWKIRK	ELLSWORTH
SWEET- WATER	WEBBER	CHERRY VALLEY	PINORA
LAKE	PLEASANT PLAINS	YATES	CHASE

In theory, each township was to be six miles square. But in fact because of the earth's curvature this measurement is not exactly correct.

Smaller than the township is the Supervisor's Plat which is laid out in blocks, or "Metes and Bounds".

## Luther

In 1881 the Wilson brothers built a sawmill on the bank of the Little Manistee River. The settlement was called Luther, after their brother-in-law, Wm. Luther.

In 1882 a spur track was in operation from the G. R. & I. Railroad to Luther.



R. G. Peters Salt & Lumber Co. owned the Manistee & Luther Railroad which ran between those towns.

The main street of Luther was on the early stage coach route from Newaygo to Traverse City.

The only turpentine factory in Lake County was once located in Luther. The village also had a grist mill, charcoal kilns, a cigar factory, saw mills, four churches, three doctors, photo studio, opera house, newspaper, high school and hotels. Luther's first bank was operating in 1903 with S. Buckner. There are three pioneer cemeteries within a mile of Luther.

## Fishing

The trout was adopted as the Michigan fish in 1965.

The five limit on steelheads brought out many fishermen in 1987.

A seventeen pound, three ounce walleye was caught in 1951 in the Pine River by Ray Fodely of Yorktown Indiana.

The first German Brown Trout from the Northville hatchery were planted in the Baldwin River in Lake County in 1884 by J Ellis.

In 1985, Robert Abbot of Caledonia took an eight pound, eight ounce large mouth bass from Seaman lake, Lake Co.



A twelve pound, fourteen ounce walleye was taken from the Manistee River by Lawrence Burnette in 1985. This was the largest walleye taken in Michigan during 1985.



The grayling disappeared from Michigan waters over fifty years ago but in 1984 the DNR restocked 85,000 of the fish.



## Hunting

First deer hunting and fishing law was enacted in Michigan in 1859.

First bow hunting season opened in 1957.

First muzzle loading deer season took effect in 1975.



First elk hunting season during modern times in 1964.

Michigan has more state parks and prepared camp sites than any other state.

The pine marten has been absent from the lower peninsula for over 80 years. During the winter of '85 and '86 the DNR and the Forest Service released 15 of the animals in Lake county.

The Wild Turkey Hunter Festival was hosted by the Pere Marquette chapter in March, 1986 and '87. The turkey calling contest was interesting.



## Sports

A Skeet Shooting Hall of Fame inducted in 1979, Ken Sedlecky won two gold medals at the 1963 Pan American Games in Brazil. He has been on two International Skeet Shooting Teams and was captain of four All American Trap and Skeet Teams.

Ken was also on the business side of skeet. He was with Winchester for eleven years, five years with Federal Cartridge Co. and manager of central U.S. sales from Dallas for Smith & Wesson. He started out in his parent's sporting goods store in Baldwin, Michigan.

Married with two children, Sedlecky is a graduate of Ferris State in Big Rapids, Michigan. His wife, Kathleen McGinn Sedlecky was named in the Skeet Shooting Hall of Fame in 1976.



### Hole in One

At the Marquette Trails golf course, in 1986, Ted Lasley had a hole in one. John Wallace had previously duplicated this effort.



### ● Bowling ●

Try your luck at Baldwin Lanes or at the Fun Spot Lanes.

## Place Names

### BALDWIN

Hannible was the first name of this village, named after an early settler. In 1872 when Gov. Henry P. Baldwin presented the town with a flag the community was called Baldwin City, in 1875 the name was shortened to Baldwin. The county seat in 1887.



### BRANCH

Named after the north branch of the P. M. river.



### CAREY, CAREVILLE, CARRIEVILLE

Named for Henry W. Carey who came from New York State in 1881 at the age of 31. He became the secretary of Richard G. Peters who owned the Manistee & Luther Railroad, several sawmills and a salt block in East Lake. Mr. Carey became a stockholder and treasurer of the Peter's Lumber & Salt Co.



### CHASE

First called Joiner, then Green Dell, and then Chase who was governor of Ohio in the 1870's.



### IRONS

Named for Wilford Wilcox McIrons who emigrated from Ireland to Syracuse, New York state and in 1867 changed his name to Irons and homesteaded in Lake County.

## Place Names

### ELLSWORTH

Named for Ephraim Elmer Ellsworth who was in the Civil War with the First Michigan Infantry. The township was settled in 1867 by homesteaders, mostly war veterans from New York State.

### FORMAN

Named for C. H. Forman, who in 1873, operated a sawmill near the Yates west township line.

### LUDINGTON AVE.

From M-37 and 24th St. in Lake County. Named for James Ludington (1827-91) who in 1862 platted the village bearing his name.

### NE-BO-SHONE

An Indian word meaning "bend in the river." This Pine River community was settled by Civil War veterans and later became a private resort.

### PEACOCK

Named for David J. Peacock who was the first postmaster in 1897.

### STEARNS SIDING

Named for Justice Smith Stearns who had a sawmill near the Pere Marquette River. Given the name of Bennett by the Post Office Department.

### WINGLETON

Named for G. LaForest Wing, a lumberman.





HECKMAN  
BINDERY INC.



**JUL 91**

N. MANCHESTER,  
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